

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, 11 and 13-22 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, Claims 1-7, 11 and 13-22 are currently amended and Claim 9 is canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Kuwahara (US 3,454,978). Claims 3 and 13-22 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuwahara in view of Yip (US 6,125,501).

Initially, all the claims have been amended to clarify that they relate to a vacuum cleaner.

Claim 1

Independent Claim 1 has been amended and now recites a vacuum cleaner comprising: at least one collection chamber for accumulating the particles; a suction device; at least one reception chamber storing said suction device; a partition separating said collection chamber from said reception chamber and having a partition surface, said partition having an inlet orifice formed therein for channeling an air stream from said collection chamber to said suction device, said inlet orifice of said partition coupling said collection chamber to said suction device in said reception chamber; an air guide funnel having an entry surface forming a part of said partition surface, the air guide funnel directly contacting the suction device; an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward said collection chamber, wherein said intervention guard element is a dome-shaped rigid ribbed body having gaps formed therein for a largely unobstructed routing of the air stream from said collection space through to said suction device; a filter bag disposed in said collection space for accumulating the particles.

Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, “the air guide funnel directly contacting the suction device,” as recited in Claim 1. Rather, the partition (8) of Kuwahara terminates at the end of the spout (9) and does not contact anything.

For these and other reasons, Kuwahara does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-7, and 11

depend from Claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

Claim 13

Independent Claim 13 recites a vacuum cleaner, comprising: a collection chamber for accumulating particles; a suction device including a motor and a blower generating an air flow; a reception chamber housing the suction device; a partition separating the collection chamber from the reception chamber and defining an inlet orifice receiving the air flow from the collection chamber; an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice, the air guide funnel directly contacting the suction device and being disposed adjacent the blower, the blower being disposed between the motor and the air guide funnel; and an intervention guard element connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward the collection chamber.

As described above in relation to Claim 1, Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, “the air guide funnel directly contacting the suction device.” In addition, Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, the air guide funnel “being disposed adjacent the blower, the blower being disposed between the motor and the air guide funnel.” Yip does not cure the defects of Kuwahara.

For these and other reasons, Kuwahara and Yip, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by independent Claim 13. Therefore, Claim 13 is allowable. Claims 14-18 depend from Claim 13 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

Claim 19

Independent Claim 19 recites a vacuum cleaner, comprising: a collection chamber for accumulating particles; a suction device including a motor and a blower generating an air flow; a reception chamber housing the suction device; a partition separating the collection chamber from the reception chamber and defining an inlet orifice receiving the air flow from the collection chamber; an air guide funnel connected to the partition at the

inlet orifice and extending away the collection chamber to an exit orifice disposed adjacent the blower, the blower being disposed between the motor and the air guide funnel; an intervention guard element including a dome-shaped rigid ribbed body connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward the collection chamber; and a filter bag disposed in the collection space for accumulating the particles.

As described above in relation to Claims 1 and 13, Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, “the air guide funnel directly contacting the suction device.” In addition, Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, the air guide funnel “being disposed adjacent the blower, the blower being disposed between the motor and the air guide funnel.” Furthermore, Kuwahara does not disclose, among other things, “an intervention guard element including a dome-shaped *rigid* ribbed body connected to the air guide funnel and projecting in a direction toward the collection chamber.” Yip does not cure the defects of Kuwahara.

For these and other reasons, Kuwahara and Yip, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by independent Claim 19. Therefore, Claim 19 is allowable. Claims 20-22 depend from Claim 19 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 1-7, 11 and 13-22 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig J. Loest', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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